

Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge

May 18 – May 24, 2014 [Issue 2]

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Photo of the Week



Photo Credit: USFWS/Yianni Laskaris

A Message from Monomoy

Phew! The first two weeks are under our belt, as we are finally settling into our summer routine. Staff has been busy locating several new piping plover and American oystercatcher nests scattered throughout the three islands. Plover exclosures are in the process of being erected on South Monomoy and AMOY census has widened our eyes as to how many pairs are nesting on the refuge.

But let's not forget about our tern colony. Camp set-up has been one of the refuge's main focuses and on 23 May, staff was allowed to spend their first night on the island. But that's not all! Staff has also noted the colony beginning to nest and has already started to conduct stints and set up productivity plots.

2014 Field Season Update

This is a weekly synopsis of biological activities on South Monomoy, North Monomoy, and Minimoy Islands. Information within this report is subject to change. For up to date information, please contact Refuge Staff.

Bird Sightings

Double-crested cormorant
Great black-backed gull
Herring gull
Ring-billed gull
Glaucous gull
Iceland gull
Laughing gull
Willet
Greater yellowlegs
Lesser yellowlegs
Black-crowned night heron
American bittern
Barn swallow
White-rumped sandpiper
Least sandpiper
Short-billed dowitcher
Black tern
Spotted sandpiper (5/18)

Black-bellied plover
Semipalmated plover
Semipalmated sandpiper
Sanderling
Dunlin
Snowy owl (5/22)
Great egret
White-throated sparrow
Turkey vulture
Peregrine falcon
Tricolored heron
Red-winged blackbird
Common grackle
Ruddy turnstone
Wilson's plover
Red Knot
Yellow-crowned night heron
Common eider

Bird Activity

Piping Plovers (PIPL)

Thirteen new nests were located this week, for a total of 23 active PIPL nests on South Monomoy Island. Additionally, a two egg nest was found on Minimoy for a 2nd consecutive year. Scraping continues to be observed at Broad Creek on North Monomoy Island, which produced one nest in 2013. Five PIPL nests were lost this week to unknown causes, though one nest displayed signs of predation. Non-lethal predator management techniques have been implemented to protect nests, with three predator exclosures erected on Plover Beach/Connection. More information will be provided once it becomes available.

American Oystercatchers (AMOY)

The AMOY census window was initiated on May 22nd. Staff conducted nest checks and documented all pairs seen on all three islands this week. A total of 4 nests on South Monomoy Island, 5 nests on North Monomoy Island, and 3 nests on Minimoy have been found, for a total of 12 nests on the Refuge. The first nest expected to hatch, will occur around June 5th. Many additional pairs have been sighted and documented scraping. Staff will continue to monitor nesting areas for new nests.

Common Terns (COTE)

The first COTE nests were located in the colony on South Monomoy Island on May 19th, with additional nests seen near camp. On May 24th, monitoring of the colony continued, with staff working to complete 7 productivity plots, 1 day stint and 1 kleptoparasitism stint.

Twenty-five dead adult terns were found in the colony on May 23rd, displaying signs of avian predation, though the predatory species remains unknown.

Roseate Terns (ROST)

More ROST have been heard and seen landing in and around the colony this week, though no nests have been located at this time. Both sound systems and nesting structures have continued to attract roseate terns south of the main colony. The first day stint was conducted on May 24th, with additional stints planned for the following weeks.

Black Skimmers (BLSK)

No new information to report. BLSK have not been sighted on the refuge.

Least Terns (LETE)

On May 23rd, the first LETE nests of the season were identified. A total of 16 nests were found at the south end of South Monomoy Island in areas with previous recorded LETE nesting. Staff will continue to monitor areas with past LETE nesting.

Roseate habitat restoration Project

This year, Monomoy NWR will be taking an active role in creating more suitable nesting habitat for the endangered roseate tern. Our hope is this project will aid their recovery and encourage nesting on the refuge. Funding used for this vital project came from the Cooperative Recovery Initiative from the USFWS for roseate terns.

So far, 725 seaside goldenrods have been planted in 3 separate study areas and 1 test plot, two of which are south of the main colony in historical nesting sites for ROST. Staff has taken 9 photoplots to monitor how the plants will grow throughout the season. These photos will provide insight on where to plant the 1200 goldenrod plants coming in the fall. More information on this project will follow as necessary.

Wading Bird Census

Our wading bird colony was censused on North Monomoy Island on May 16th. Refuge staff located Black crowned night-heron, Snowy egret, and Great egret nests. Results from the census indicate 227 nests were found, comprised of 156 BCNH nests, 25 GREG nests, and 46 SNEG nests!

iPlover

The Refuge is cooperating with the NPS and USGS as a beta test site for an exciting new app: iPlover. With this app, important nest site data is collected, and used to determine how plover nest site selection relates to rising sea levels and climate change. More information will follow in the next weekly update.

Salt Marsh Integrity

Nekton sampling sites for 3 of our SMI units (Morris Island, North Monomoy Island, and Minimoy) have been ground truthed to date, with plans to survey sampling sites at Hospital pond next week. Additionally, our water level loggers have arrived and will be calibrated and deployed shortly. SMI vegetation surveys plan to begin on June 1st.

Current & Upcoming Events

AMOY Census Window	May 22 - 31
Horseshoe Crab Resighting	May 26-30
Horseshoe Crab Tagging	May 30
Shorebird Survey Window 3	May 27-31
Tern Census	June 5-8

MAY 2014						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31